SCRIP TALK

May/June 2011 *Volume # 39* *Issue # 165*

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BORATES

BY BILL FUGERA

I receive a western memorabilia auction catalogue from Holabird – Kagin located in Reno, Nevada. H – K specializes in buying, selling and appraising western Americana, (coins, trade tokens, bank notes, ingots, western antiquities, and mining goods). While looking through the catalogue, I saw a picture of a metal scrip. It was a square 15 cent aluminum piece with BORAX COMMISSARY on it. At this point I became curious. Where and when was this scrip used? The word BORAX was familiar. I remember the television program called Death Valley Days narrated by Ronald Reagan and other actors. The program was broadcast on radio from 1930 to 1945 and on TV from 1952 to 1975. The series was sponsored by Pacific Coast Borax Company. The program's content featured true stories of the American west mainly the Death Valley area. The show hosts also advertised Borateam, a laundry detergent, and Boraxo, a powered hand soap. The 20 Mule Team trade mark is well known with these products. Further research pointed me to the Mojave Desert in California and Nevada and the borate mining industry.

History reveals there were several borate mining companies. This article will mainly focus on several main players and the evolution of Rio Tindo Borax Ltd.

Borax is the most wide spread of the many borate minerals. It is chemically sodium tetraborate and is a molecule of so-

dium, boron, oxygen, and hydrogen ($Na_2B_4O_7$ .10H2O). It occurs in nature as a mineral called tincal. Other naturally occurring borates are colemite (calcium borate) and ulexite (sodium calcium borate). Today boron minerals and compounds are more often known generally as borates.

Borax specimens are translucent when fresh, but eventually lose water of hydration and turn opaque, developing a white power on the surface. Borax can be produced from other borates. Borates are found in the mud's of alkaline lakes along with minerals such as rock salt, sulfates, and carbonates. Borates accumulated near the sites of Pliocene lakes, where hot springs and volcanic activity are believed to be the source of the boron – rich brines that fed these lakes. Upon evaporation, deposits of borax and other borates formed. Large deposits are found in the western US, South America, Turkey, and Tibet. It is estimated that the borate deposits were formed 12 to 18 million years ago.

Borax has been used commercially for hundreds of years. Although not substantiated, the Babylonians brought borax from the far east more than 4,000 years ago to be used by goldsmiths. There is also some reference that the ancient Egyptians were users of borax in metallurgy, medicine and mummification. The earliest confirmed use was in ceramic glazes traced to the tenth century. Marco Polo introduced it to Europe around 1275. it was used for glazes and soldering gold. By the 1800's borax had gained widespread use in glass blowing and gold refining. Some modern uses of borax are disinfectants, detergents, water softening, food preservation, ceramics, glass, fiber glass, coated paper, pest control and agricultural nutrients.

The accepted date for discovery of borates in the U. S. is on January 8, 1856 near Red Bluff in Tehama County, California. A doctor at a health resort had evaporated water from a mineral spring and identified the residue as containing borates. He was trying to determine more precisely the mineral properties of the water.

Currently the only major borax mining in the US is near the city of Boron, California owned by Rio Tinto Borax Ltd. The city of Boron is named after the element Boron in the chemical periodical table. Boron began as a small community for prospectors looking for gold, silver, borates, and other minerals. The area initially contained a grocery store, gas station, and a saloon. Prior to 1938 the town of Boron was called Amargo. When huge scale borax mining began, a town hall meeting was held and a Pacific Coast Borax Company supervisor recommended changing the town name from Amargo to Boron. The decision was unanimous.

Borate mining on a small scale in the US started at Clear Lake north of San Francisco in 1864. In 1872 the first major production of borax in the US started at Teels Marsh, Nevada. A gold prospector named Francis Smith was contracting to provide fire wood to a small borax company. Smith spotted a place in Teels Marsh where the only trees were growing. Smith collected mineral samples that assayed higher than any known source of

borates.

Returning to Teels Marsh, Smith and his helpers staked claims and laid the foundation for his career as a borate miner. With the help of his older brother Julius and financial support from two Storey brothers, operations began in 1873 under the name, Smith and Storey Brothers Co. Smith later acquired the Storey's interests and the name was changed to Smith Brothers Borax Co. A few years later the name was changed to Teels Marsh Borax Co.

It was reported that Smith and his brother shipped their borax using two large wagons with a third wagon for food and water drawn by a 24-mule team over 160 miles between Teels Marsh and the Central Pacific Railroad at Wadsworth, Nevada. This was some six years before similar 20 mule teams were introduced to Death Valley. In 1884 Smith bought out his brother.

Smith's San Francisco based sales agent W. T. Coleman was also developing his own borax operation in the California desert, including one at Death Valley called Harmony Borax Works. Harmony Borax Works was the central feature in the opening of Death Valley. This rich deposit was located 165 miles from the nearest train station located at Mojave, California. Coleman built the Harmony plant and began to process ore in late 1883 or early 1884. When in full operation the Harmony operation employed 40 men and produced three tons of borax daily. Getting the finished product to market from Death Valley was a difficult task.

To get the borax to the railroad, Coleman's employees devised a transport system. This was the famous " 20 Mule Team ". This team was actually 18 mules and two horses. The draft horses were better at controlling the wagon tongue. This team pulled three wagons, one that held water and two that could haul over 20 tons of ore from the mine to the railroad. The trip took ten days across trails from below sea level to 4,000 feet above sea level. The temperatures got as high as 130 degrees. This mule train lasted from 1883 to 1888.

In 1883 prospectors discovered borates near the town of Calico, California. The new site was called Borate. Borate, California no longer exists and is confused with the current town of Boron, California. Coleman bought all of the best claims to control competition. From 1890 to 1907, these mines were the largest in the US with a total production worth in excess of $9,000,000. Coleman continued to buy additional properties in Death Valley to the extent he cornered the borate market. By over producing, the prices of borates fell sharply. Coleman also tried to corner the raisin market. He suffered a huge financial short fall losing millions of dollars. He tried to sell off some of his borate operations, but, was unsuccessful. He was ultimately forced to mortgage them to Smith and lost them in 1890. Coleman's economic kingdom totally collapsed.

With the demise of Coleman's financial empire in 1890, Smith took possession of his holdings at Borate, California, in the Death Valley and Amargosa valleys, and his Alameda refinery, and consolidated these into the Pacific Coast Borax Company. Smith also took over the colemite deposits in the Furnace Creek area. Declining borax prices due to borax imports from Italy and a glut of borax on the market prompted Smith to close down his Death Valley properties and concentrate at Borate, where richer ore could be refined by less expensive processes. During the years,1890 to 1907, Borate became the top producer of borax and boric acid in the US.

In 1895 Smith was concerned about competitive imports of borates to the US and as an oportunitist he was always looking for new markets for his own products, plus raising capital. He went on a " hunting " trip in 1896 to England to size up the other borate world. While in England Smith discovered a food preservative company that used borax and boric acid. Smith signed an agreement creating Pacific Coast Borax and Redwood's Chemical works Ltd. In 1899 Smith went a step further with English and French companies with mining interests in South America, Turkey and France, forming Borax Consolidated Ltd. The merger was given an official reason in the prospectus of the new

company, Borax Consolidated, Limited, published in London, which, after listing the companies and properties comprised in it proclaimed:

> **The said properties are believed to comprise all the important mines and sources of production of raw material from which nearly the whole supply of the world has hitherto been obtained. The acquisition and consolidation of these properties will enable the Company to put an end to the competition which has hitherto existed between them, and the economies which will be effected by the various properties and concerns being under one administration should substantially increase the profits hitherto made, without any undue inflation of prices.**

However there was still competition from the Italian producers influence in the European market. There was a trickle of Tibetan ore over the passes into India and into Europe. Also of concern was the formidable competition that already existed in the US and South America.

The two major problems plaguing Smith at Borate were transportation and processing of the ore. The ore was hand sorted and hauled to the rail terminal at the town of Daggett by using the 20 mule teams used at Death Valley. Smith was unhappy with the mule train and experimented with a steam tractor that was not practical because of the nature of the road. A narrow gauge railroad was constructed in 1898. The ore was shipped to a calcining plant located at Marion just north of Daggett. The ore was processed to separate it from the worthless material. This allowed a better grade of ore to be shipped to Alameda, California, thus reducing freight costs.

By 1900 the Pacific Coast Borax Company realized that their operation in Borate would soon be exhausted, and started looking for new ore sites in the Death Valley area. Smith's operation shifted from Borate to the Lila C mine at Lila C. All of the buildings and equipment were removed from Borate and shipped to Lila C. The Lila C mine was one of Coleman's original holdings until it was sold to Smith. The mine was named after Coleman's daughter Lila. The Lila C was near Smith's Tonopah & Tidewater Railroad. The town of Ryan grew up around the Lila C. It had a small post office and roughly 200 inhabitants.

When the Lila C appeared to have played out, the rails were ripped up for use by the Death Valley Railroad to a new mining area of Devar. When new deposits of borates were found at Lila C, a narrow gauge line was built to serve the mine. The Lila C was one of the richest in Death Valley and eventually played out in 1915 after seven years of operation.

In 1913, Smith like William Coleman became financially over extended and had to turn over most of his assets to creditors, who refused to extend new loans. He lost his borate mines, company, land, transit investments, private railroad and boats. His share of Borax Consolidated LTD. Were sold on the London stock exchange. Smith had controlling in-

terest and his stock sale put control of the company in British hands. Richard C. Baker took over the Pacific Coast Borax Company in 1913 and two years later opened the Biddy McCarthy mine 12 miles northwest of new Ryan. Pacific Coast Borax Company prospered after the departure of Smith. Smith had a one time amassed a personal fortune of around $25,000,000.

With the discovery in 1914 of a huge ore deposit north west of the Lila C, a new $400,000 processing plant was constructed at Death Valley Junction. In 1915, the Pacific Coast borax Company switched operations to the Biddy McCarthy, Lower Biddy, and Grand View mines at Devar which became new Ryan after the post office from old Ryan located there. Old Ryan was torn down and every thing was hauled to the Biddy McCarthy area. Ore was hauled from the various workings of the several mines by a 24 inch narrow gauge railroad called the Baby Gauge to new ore storage bins in New Ryan. The ore was hauled over the narrow gauge Death Valley Railroad to Death Valley Junction.

In 1914 the Death Valley Railroad started operating between new Ryan and Death Valley Junction. The Death valley Railroad was built specifically to transport borates to the new Ryan mine. Borate production reached 110,000 tons during World War I.

From 1923 to 1925 the Pacific Coast Borax Company constructed buildings in Death Valley Junction. Death Valley Junction was created primarily as a railroad town, at the confluence of the Tonopah & Tidewater Railroad (which ran north and south) and the Death Valley Railroad that ran to the mines at Ryan. At its peak before the mines closed at Ryan in 1927 about 100 people lived there. Death Valley Junction was a major terminal consisting of a processing facility for the mined ore. This company town provided services, company store, church, dormitories, hotel, and employee head quarters for borax workers in Death Valley. The main building was adobe style containing the company store, dorm, offices, dining room, hotel lobby, rec hall and employees head quarters. The rec hall was used for movies, dances, weddings, church services, and town meetings. Mining in the area ceased in 1928.

Pacific Coast Borax Company's production changed and increased in 1925 near present day Boron, California.

Dr. J. K. Suckow was drilling for water and discovered the world's largest known borate deposit in California. This discovery by Dr. Suckow is significant relative to borates. The Dr. immigrated from Germany. He arrived in New York and hitched a ride to California. While working in a Los Angeles pharmacy he studied medicine at the University of Southern California and graduated in 1905 specializing in the broad area of aches and pains know as rheumatism, for which medical dogma prescribed the dry warmth of the high desert. Suckow sought to establish his own sanatorium and in 1913 set about acquiring land in the Kramer district of the Mojave Desert under the Homestead Act. As part of the work necessary to prove up a homestead he preceded to drill for water. The driller de-

livered the Dr. a telegram that he had struck shale and indicated water was unlikely. He was instructed to drill deeper. The results were some white rocks that Suckow displayed on his mantel in his consulting room. A patient saw the rocks and offered to identify them. They were borate minerals. Pacific Coast Borax Company later purchased the Dr.'s claim.

Two other prospectors also found a huge deposit of borates 120 feet thick near the Suckow's find. Sold to Pacific Borax Company in early 1926, it became known as the Baker mine. It yielded a substantial percentage of the borates produced in the area until 1932. Further drilling by Pacific Coast Borax Company found additional quantities of borates. Suckow continued drilling and found additional borates and formed Suckow Chemical Company. Later Suckow Chemical formed a 50 per cent joint venture with Pacific Coast Borax.

Litigation resulted in the closing of the mine in 1932. It was reopened in 1935 as the West Baker mine owned by Pacific Coast Borax Company. Another mine called the Western mine was also acquired by Pacific Coast Borax Company in 1933. The official start of production in the Boron area was in 1927 at which the company shut down most of it's other mines in the Death Valley area

Pacific Coast Borax Company also diversified around this time into hotel management, opening a luxury resort facility in Death Valley called The Furnace Creek Inn. Rather than abandon their railroad line and other facilities in Death Valley, the Pacific Coast Borax Company decided to branch out into the tourist business, and they built a luxury hotel, Furnace Creek inn, in Death Valley. A stay in the resort included side trips by motor bus to Dante's View, the Devil's Golf Course, Furnace Creek Ranch, and the Harmony Borax Works where they could see two of the famous twenty mule team wagons. The tourists were also taken to Ryan where they were given a ride on the Baby Gauge railroad. Riding in open- air cars on the Baby Gauge, the tourists were transported across the country side, and they were taken inside the Charley McCarthy and Widow mines. The Baby Gauge railroad continued to be used for tours until the late 1950's. Today room rates at the Furnace Creek Inn are in the $200 plus per night and hard to get reservations in the cool part of the year.

Boron was previously called Amargo. In 1938 after the large deposit of borates were discovered and mining had begun, a town hall meeting was called and a supervisor of Pacific Coast Borax, suggested changing the name of Amargo to Boron. Boron is the fifth element on the periodic table and combines with other nonmetallic minerals to form a family of related minerals called borates. After this was explained at the meeting, Boron was unanimously chosen as the new name. When the mines were ready for operations, the little town of Amargo was not ready to accommodate the influx of workers. Employees lived at the mine in tents, small cabins, and a few houses. Meals were provided family style at the cook house.

As Boron developed there were the company houses, company store, recreation hall, company doctors/nurses, post office in the company store, and scrip. Prior to World War II the employees were 80% single men. For the single men, there were single room cabin type structures. These cabins contained two beds, two tables, two closets, two chest of drawers and one wood/coal stove. These cabins were wood frame, wood floor and a double roof for ventilation. There were also several four room dormitory buildings. Summer temperatures reach the 90's and higher. Rent for room and board was $5.00 per week.

Homesteads were being filed as more families came to find work at the new mine. Some married couples lived in clusters of housing that were built near water wells. The water wells were privately owned and water had to be purchased. The company also provided water to residents. Some of the miners lived in near by towns. Since it was the depression, building materials were hard to find. People used what ever was available. Many homes in Boron today reflect these humble beginnings such as the ones made of lava rock from the surrounding area. There was a choice of black or red lava rock. Other building choices were railroad ties and refrigerator cars from the railroad. The Santa Fe Railroad was switching over from using block ice to electrical refrigeration and had surplus cars that could be cheaply purchased. Because the cars were double built to provide the most insulation, enough building material could be scavenged from the inner walls to build another room. Before air conditioning was available, residents hung wet burlap sacks in windows and door ways to take advantage of any breeze. In the summer, the desert cools some what at night. Rattle snakes, scorpions and spiders were a problem.

After receiving their first pay check, some miners quit. The company also was known to send buses to skid row in Los Angeles to pick up potential miners.

In the 1930's before Boron became a town and had a post office mail arrived and was left on a table under a rock in front of the general store at Baker mines and picked up by the recipients. As in many company towns there was a baseball teal called the " MULES".

In 1956, Pacific Coast Borax merged with United States Potash Corporation to form U. S. Borax, which itself was acquired by the Rio Tinto Group in 1967 as a wholly owned subsidiary. The company now is called Rio Tinto Borax and is a part of Rio Tinto Minerals and continues to supply nearly half of the world's borates.

To learn more about borate mining and to investigate the scrip, I took a day trip to Boron. The trip was an easy two and one half hour drive. Prior to my trip I contacted Mrs. Barbara Pratt at the Boron museum. She is a director at the museum and is very knowledgeable of the history of Boron. She commented that she lived at Boron since 1932.

Upon arriving in Boron, I noticed that the housing was older. There were many identical houses, some with modifications, yet, it was easy to tell they were of the same mold. A sign that these were probably company houses at one time.

It was easy to find the museum located on 20 Mule Team Road. The museum is a converted home that at one time was occupied by a Pacific Coast Borax staff employee. The museum is well stocked with artifacts of the Borax mining industry and the surrounding area. Of interest was an exhibit showing pictures and company history of Pacific Coast Borax Company. The museum contained the most extensive collection of mining lighting that I have ever seen. In the exhibit were many different carbide lamps, oil wick lamps and several Varney type candle sticks. This lighting exhibit is provided by Deric English.

The formation of the museum is an interesting story. In the late 1970's members of the Boron Chamber of Commerce thought the town needed a museum. The chamber was offered a mile-long strip of land for $8,000. Through fund raisings and donations the land was purchased. At this time Pacific Coast Borax merged with United States Potash and changed their name to U. S. Borax and moved their main mining operation from the original location used for supporting their under ground mining operations in the 1920's to a new facility and location closer to their open pit mine. Many of the old staff homes and cabins that had made up the old mining camp were sold to Borax employees and town residents. Many of these buildings were moved to various locations and served several purposes including tool sheds, garages, and children's play houses.

One of the staff houses was sold to a Paul Sigman who resold it for $1,000 to the Chamber. Local businesses and U. S. Borax donated enough money to convert the old house to a museum. The old house was moved to its present location on May 24, 1978. The conversion from a house to a museum took several years using volunteer workers. On August 4,1984 the Twenty Mule Team Museum was officially dedicated and opened.

While in Boron, Mrs. Pratt recommended that I visit the mining operation north west of town. Currently all mining is now open pit. The under ground operation was discontinued in 1957. From 1927 to 1957 the under ground mines produced 9 million tons of ore. Today the production is 3 million tons per year. This is the largest open pit mine in California. It is one and one half miles long, three quarters of a mile wide and 650 feet deep. The mining facility has a visitors center on a hill of over burden. From this vantage point one can view the processing facilities and the open pit. The center contains exhibits and a video that further describes the mining operation and the commercial part of borax chemicals.

The mining and processing of the ore is rather basic. The under ground mining some what operated like a coal mine. Workers took an elevator to an under ground tunnel where the ore was extracted. The ore was sent to the surface in chunks where it was crushed and screened to pebble size for processing in the extraction tanks. Mining started with drilling and blasting and the use of ore trains. In the early 50's continuous miners and mechanical moving belts were used.

After blasting the ore loose, massive shovels scoop up the ore and load it into trucks. The shovels are capable of lifting 80 tons per scoop. These shovels are seven stories tall and are powered by 7100 volts of electricity. The shovels fill trucks that are 20 feet high, 40 feet long and drive on 12 foot high tires. Each one carries 240 tons of material. The ore is transferred to a tank of borate liquor and hot water. The borates dissolve. Insoluble rocks, sand and other solids are recovered using screens. The borate liquor is then transferred to settling tanks where additional rocks and sand are removed and the borates are dissolved in the liquor. The borate liquor is then moved to tanks called chrystallizers and cooled. The borates crystallize forming a slurry of crystals and water. The slurry is poured over special fabric filters and washed to insure purity. Water is removed by a vacuum under the filter. The damp borate is then dried, stored, packed and shipped.

There are two basic types of borate ores in the pit, each requiring a different refining and processing method. One of these ores is currently being stored in large piles near the pit. When the first ore is depleted, the plant will be converted to refine and process the second type of ore. While the second ore is processed, the piles of stored over burden will be returned to the pit. By the time the last of the second ore is processed the pit will be filled in. The factory will be dismantled and the desert winds will hide the scars. The life of the remaining borax deposits at his mine are estimated to last until 2037.

Of interest to visitors are several piles of mine tailings at a remote end of the visitor center parking lot. These piles of tailings are for visitors to search for crystals. In about 10 minutes I found a number of specimens nice enough to display.

I discussed the metal scrip with Mrs. Pratt. She was not aware of metal scrip used at Boron. She only remembered paper scrip used at Boron. Mrs. Pratt introduced me to Mr. Deric English, a history teacher at Boron High School. Mr, English, a collector of mining items and tokens also commented he only knew of paper scrip that was used at Boron in the company store. Both commented that the metal scrip may have been used earlier at the Ryan facility or Death Valley Junction at Death Valley. I read a book written by Harry P. Gower who spent 50 years working at the borax mines in Death Valley. The author noted that the town of Ryan had a commissary. The metal scrip notes Borax Commissary. Is this a possible link ?

As I wrote this article, I noticed a close parallel to the Hoover Dam project. These were high summer heat, workers living in tents, rattle snakes, desert, company store, scrip and the great depression when work was tough to find. This is all part of our common American history.

My sincere thanks to the following people for their time and information that was helpful in putting this article together.

Mrs. Barbara Pratt, a true American pioneer, museum director.

Mr. Deric English, history instructor at Boron High School, mining memorabilia collector, antique collector and dealer. Contributor of Boron pictures.

Mr. Tim Bishop, collector and antique dealer.

THE BORON WAY, written by Mrs. Barbara Pratt

The TINCAL TRAIL, written by N. J. Travis & E. J. Cocks

FIFTY YEARS IN DEATH VALLEY, written by Harry P. Gower

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SCRIP TALK 1818 HARPER RD BECKLEY WV 25801

Amazing!

Billy W. Campbell

WOW !!!!! in the Jan/Feb 2011 issue of Scrip Talk, bottom of back page is an item of interest. If you don't remember go back and not only look but do something. I remember talking to a Virginia collector who has tried to get some major Virginia collectors to share information, but to no avail. WHY?? I must say I've had success when I ask a direct question to the few collectors I know in the area that they specialize in. The problem, for me, is because I collect all of West Virginia, there are so many counties that I do not know anyone collecting. If you're a collector of scrip don't you want to know who has those tokens you're missing, if they really exist, if they may have a duplicate for sale, or a number of other questions you might think of. I'm willing to give any information that might help another collector if I have it. I have some unpublished information on over 300 different mines and stores consisting of thousands of ISC record pages. Contact me personally or, better yet, send a question to Scrip Talk and maybe get multiple or a more concise answer. Years ago there was a question and answer page in Scrip Talk. It's time to revive that interesting topic. Getting back to information, some of the websites that I regularly use are West Virginia office of Miners Health Safety and Training, archive search West Virginia Department of Mines, place names of West Virginia and origins of West Virginia place names just to name four. I would think most states have something similar. I was very lucky to acquire 35 different Dun and Bradstreet directories from 1879 to 1955 from a fellow collector, just more information. If you have Directories for sale I'm sure there are others besides myself that would like to know. As you can see I still have open years that I need. Who, besides myself, has a complete set of Swandale 2731 (Clay) Elk River? They are just R6, 7,and 8's, but you never see one for sale. Of course, maybe the lumber collectors have them. This is an example of information sharing.

It's amazing how some collectors will not share information and a few will go out of their way to help. I have all issues of Scrip Talk from 1974 through 1985 and most others since I joined NSCA in the early 2000's. That said, when I go back through them I find a lot of useful information about scrip from a great many of the same people. I was talking to Jim Lackey the other day about this subject. He said, and I'll put what he said in just a little different wording, "Knowledge is like fertilizer, but if you don't spread it around it does no good." I will say that one reason collectors don't tell about their collections is security. A very good subject of discussion. Security and personal safety should be a high priority to everyone. Offsite secure storage is the best way to protect any valuables. Sure it's a little trouble, but they will be safe. Most collectors use the catalogue as reference for the tokens they have anyway. A large heavy duty home fireproof safe can work if you can keep the humidity out of it and there are ways to do that. In this day of digital and high technical security with offsite monitoring of intrusion, motion, glass breakage and visual recording with immediate security response, a system for your home and office is a ABSOLUTE must, collector or not. There are also outdoor sensors that will send a warning inside your home when a vehicle enters your drive and another type of sensor for remote movement anywhere within 150 feet of your home.

Some Edkins information or questions; let me know your thoughts:

MOUNT GAY 1991 [Logan]
The Edkins catalogue has the A1 as being Nickel. I have A1 as Aluminum, as does another Logan County collector. We both think the catalogue is wrong. Could have been described as white metal when rubbing was submitted.

TURKEY KNOB 2847 [Fayette]
The Edkins catalogue has the A1 as being Brass. I have A1 as NP, as does another Fayette collector. We both think the catalogue is wrong. Someone may have not looked very close.

ORGAS 2131 [Boone]
The Edkins catalogue has H.J. Hendricks & Sons listed in Orgas. Actually, it was P.R. Hendricks & Sons that was the company store for Vermillion Coal Co. Research in D&B shows H.J. Hendricks & Sons were in Keith, WV, and Dodrill has as the company store for Columbus-Pittsburg Coal Co.

WHITESVILLE 3013 [Boone]
The Edkins catalogue shows the H25 as MMISC Des. Pat. Who has this sneaky token ???? Walter Caldwell never had it, I have never seen it, and a long time Boone County collector doesn't have it. We all do did/have the G25 MMISC Pat. Pend. I think it's the only BLUE STAR STORE 25¢ token. ISC records show 1000 25¢ made 10-20-1930. Of course, something could have happen during the striking process that made them change the reverse die. Am I wrong on the above?

LOGAN 1616 [Logan] Is the C100a really a R9?
WENDEL 2973 [Taylor] Is the A50 & A100 really a R10?
ERSKINE 959 [Fayette] What is the difference between KLEENCOAL 1539 [Logan]?
NUTTALLBURG 2097 [Fayette] Who has a O3? Is it a R10?

Whatever State, Area, County, Company, Store, Pictorial and Etc. you collect, don't you want it to be the very best you can make it? It requires information to back up the Scrip in your collection, not just the token. Send your answers to me and I will get them into Scrip Talk so everyone will know. You can contact me at: bwcok@knology.net

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WANTED: ALL TN TOKENS – obsolete banknotes, National banknotes, Southern C.C.C., Lumber, Coal, and Huntsville, AL tokens. I have many tokens for trade including Florida. Joe C. Copeland, P.O. Box 4221, Oak Ridge, TN 37831 865-482-4215, joecope-land@comcast.net

FOR SALE: W.G. DUNCAN COAL CO. – Edkins 1701-B25 R-5 & Edkins 1157-A5 – both for $10 + SASE. Steven Kawalec, P.O. Box 4281, Clifton, NJ 07012 owlprowler@aol.com (937) 868-9258 +

TOP DOLLARS PAID FOR CARBIDE CAP LAMPS, oil wick/lard lamps, blasting cap tins, scatter tags, carbide lamp parts and other small mining artifacts that I may need in my collection. I will pay more than anyone for items needed for my collection. Contact Larry Click, 1021 N. Jefferson St., Arlington, VA 22205-2454, 703-241-3748 or email Larry-Click@msn.com +

WANTED – WILL BUY OR TRADE WEST VIRGINIA COAL RECORDS. I have original records of over 300 different towns / coal companies. 4-5,00 pages. Who would pay $50 each for R1 – R5 tokens? I will. If you like my 200 token list, let me know. Billy Campbell, bwcok@knology.net +

FLORIDA TOKENS WANTED – FLORIDA TOKENS OF ALL TYPES WANTED. Send 61¢ stamp for free sample of Florida Token Society's newsletter, TOKENEWS and request free Florida token. Check out the Florida Token Society web site: http://www.floridatokensociety.com you can join and pay dues on-line! Steve Ratliff, 1717 Saint Marys Bay Drive, Milton, FL 32583-7343 Steve@Ratliff.com check out my EBay sales, many pieces of coal scrip. All starting at 99 cents. Search florida-token-collector, be sure to click box for "Include title and description." Also looking for original or good copies of Florida B&D directories.

LISTS EXCHANGED Send two (2) stamps to receive latest trading list of exploders, lumber tokens, KY and WV coal tokens and transportation. Gene Miller, 3306 Startan Ct., Louisville, KY 40220

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